

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

1. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for allocating display space on a web page instances, the method comprising:

receiving multiple bids each indicating a bid amount, an advertisement, and a requested number of web pages instances on which the advertisement is to be placed during a time period;

receiving a request to provide ~~the a~~ web page instance to a user, the web page instance including a display space slot for displaying a single advertisement;

selecting, based at least in part on review of bid amounts and on a likelihood that the advertisement will be placed on the requested number of web pages instances during the time period, a received bid whose bid amount is not the highest of the bids whose advertisement is eligible to be placed in the display space slot of the web page instance; ~~and~~

adding the advertisement of the selected bid to the display space slot of the web page instance; ~~and~~

charging the source of the selected bid the amount indicated by the selected bid.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the selecting of a received bid is performed after receiving of the request.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the selecting of the received bid is based at least in part on demographics of the user.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the selecting of the received bid is based at least in part on time at which the request is received.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the selecting of the received bid is based at least in part on a category to which the web page instance relates.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the bid amount is based on points received for participating in a commercial transaction.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the commercial transaction is an auction.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the bid amount is based on points received for clicking through one web page instance to an instance of another web page.

10-30. (Cancelled)

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 including allocating points to users based on results of participation in transactions and wherein a bid amount indicates a number of allocated points.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31 wherein the transaction is an auction.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the participation is listing of an item to be auctioned.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the participation is placing a bid on an item.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the participation is purchasing the item.

36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 31 wherein the participation is providing a web page instance through which a person selects another web page instance.

37-40. (Cancelled)

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31 wherein a bid is received from a software component that identifies an advertising strategy for the user.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on access patterns of users to categories with which display space slot is associated.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on similarity of an item being advertised to a category with which the display space slot is associated.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on whether an item being advertised competes with an item associated with the display space.

45. (Currently Amended) A computer system for allocating advertising space slots of display pages instances, comprising:

a database for storing bids each indicating bid amount, an advertisement, and display page eligibility;

a component that receives a request to allocate an advertisement for an advertising space slot of a display page instance;

a component that selects a bid based on bid amount and display page eligibility stored in the database, wherein the selected bid does not have the highest bid amount of those bids whose advertisement is eligible to be displayed in the advertising space slot of the display page instance to maximize overall revenue received from placement of advertisements;

a component that charges the source of the selected bid the amount indicated by the selected bid; and

a component that indicates that the advertisement of the selected bid is being allocated to the advertising space slot of the display page instance

so that the advertisement of the selected bid is displayed within the advertising space slot of the display ~~space~~page instance.

46 (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 wherein the selecting of a bid is performed after receiving of the request.

47. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 wherein the display page eligibility is based in part on demographics of the user.

48. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 wherein the display page eligibility is based in part on time at which the request is received.

49. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 wherein the display page eligibility is based in part on a category to which the display page relates.

50. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 including associated with each bid a requested number of advertisements to be placed within a specified time period, and wherein bids are selected in part on a likelihood that the requested number of advertisements associated with the bid will be placed within a specified time period.

51. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 wherein the bid amount is based on points received for participating in a commercial transaction.

52. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 51 wherein the commercial transaction is an auction.

53. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 45 wherein the bid amount is based on points received for clicking through one display page instance to an instance of another display page.

54. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 wherein the bid amount varies based on degree to which the display page matches the display page eligibility.

55. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 45 wherein advertising space slots are auctioned to bidders.

56-74. (Cancelled)

75. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for allocating a display space slot of a web page instances, the method comprising:

providing a plurality of advertising plans, each advertising plan having a bid amount, an advertisement, and a specification of a display space slot to which the advertisement is to be allocated;

receiving a request to select an advertisement for a display space slot of a web page instance;

identifying advertising plans whose specification of display space slots match the display space slot of the web page instance; and

selecting an identified advertising plan whose advertisement is to be displayed on the display space slot of the web page instance and whose bid amount is not the highest bid amount of the identified advertising plans and charging the source of the selected advertising plan the bid amount associated with the selected advertising plan, wherein selecting such an identified advertising plan tends to increase overall advertising revenue

so that the advertisement of the selected advertising plan is displayed as the only advertisement within the display space slot of the web page instance.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 75 wherein each advertising plan has an end time and a requested number of advertisement placements and wherein the selecting selects an advertisement plan with a lower bid amount that is near its end time rather than an advertisement plan with a higher bid amount that is not as near its end time.

77. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 76 wherein each advertising plan includes a requested number of web pages instances on which to place advertisements and wherein the selecting factors in the number of the requested number of web pages instances on which advertisements have been placed.

78. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 75 including dynamically generating a normalized bid amount for at least some of the advertising plans and wherein the selecting selects the identified advertising plan with the highest normalized bid amount.

79. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 78 wherein the normalized bid amount for an advertising plan factors in the likelihood that the advertisement will be included on a requested number of web pages instances.

80. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 75 wherein the identifying of the advertising plans is based at least in part on demographics of a user requesting the web page instance.

81. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 75 wherein the identifying of the advertising plans is based at least in part on a category to which the web page instance relates.

82. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 75 wherein a bid amount is based on points received for participating in a commercial transaction.

83. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 82 wherein the commercial transaction is an auction.

84. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 83 wherein the participation is a listing of an item to be auctioned.

85. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 83 wherein the participation is bidding at the auction.

86. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 83 wherein the participation is placing the winning bid at the auction.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 75 wherein an advertising plan is received from a software component that identifies an advertising strategy.

88. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 87 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on access patterns of users to categories with which the display space slot is associated.

89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 87 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on similarity of an item being advertised to a category with which the display space slot is associated.

90. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 87 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on whether an item being advertised competes with an item associated with the display space slot.

91. (Currently Amended) A computer system for allocating display space on a display page instances, comprising:

a component that provides a plurality of advertising plans, each advertising plan with a bid amount;

receiving a request to select an advertisement for a display space of the display page instance;

identifying advertising plans whose advertisements can be placed on the display space of the ~~web-paged~~ display page instance; and

selecting an identified advertising plan whose advertisement is to be displayed on the display space of the display page instance and whose bid amount is not the

highest bid amount of the identified advertising plans wherein selecting such an identified advertising plan tends to increase overall advertising revenue; and charging the source of the selected advertising plan the bid amount associated with the selected advertising plan so that the advertisement of the selected advertising plan is displayed on the display space of the display page instance.

92. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 91 wherein each advertising plan has an end time and a requested number of advertisement placements and wherein the selecting selects an advertisement plan with a lower bid amount that is near its end time rather than an advertisement plan with a higher bid amount that is not as near its end time.

93. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 92 wherein each advertising plan includes a requested number of display pages instances on which to place advertisements and wherein the selecting factors in the number of the requested number of display pages instances on which advertisements have been placed.

94. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 91 including generating a normalized bid amount for at least some of the identified advertising plans and wherein the selecting selects the identified advertising plan with the highest normalized bid amount.

95. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 94 wherein the normalized bid amount is generated dynamically.

96. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 94 wherein the normalized bid amount for an advertising plan factors in the likelihood that the advertisement will be included on a requested number of display pages instances.

97. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 91 wherein an advertising plan is received from a software component that identifies an advertising strategy.

98. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 97 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on access patterns of users to categories with which display space is associated.

99. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 97 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on similarity of an item being advertised to a category with which the display space is associated.

100. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 97 wherein the advertising strategy is based at least in part on whether an item being advertised competes with an item associated with the display space.

101. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for selecting advertisements for placement on web pages instances, the method comprising:

providing advertising plans, each advertising plan including an amount that is a bid amount, an advertisement, and a requested number of web pages instances on which the advertisement is to be placed during a time period;

for each advertising plan, tracking a placed number of times its advertisement has been selected for placement on a web page instance during its time period;

receiving a request for an advertisement to be placed in a display slot of a web page instance that has been requested by a user; and

upon receiving the request,

identifying provided advertising plans whose advertisements are eligible to be placed in the display space slot of the web page instance;

for each eligible advertising plan, determining a likelihood that its advertisement will be placed on the requested number of web pages instances based on the placed number and the time remaining in its time period;

selecting an eligible advertising plan whose determined likelihood is less than the likelihood of another advertising plan and whose amount is lower than the amount of the other advertising plan;

charging the source of the selected advertising plan the amount of the selected advertising plan; and

sending an indication of the advertisement of the selected advertising plan as a response to the received request

so that the advertisement of the selected advertising plan can be displayed in the display space slot of the web page instance that has been requested by a user.

102. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for allocating display space on a web page instances, the method comprising:

providing bids from advertisers each bid indicating a bid amount and an advertisement;

receiving a request to provide ~~the a~~ web page instance to a user, the web page instance including a display space slot;

generating normalized bid amounts for the provided bids whose advertisements are eligible to be placed on the web page instance wherein placing the advertisement of the bid with the highest normalized bid amount in the display space slot of the web page instance is anticipated to maximize revenue; and

placing the advertisement of the bid with the highest normalized bid amount in the display space slot of the web page instance wherein the bid with the highest normalized bid is not the bid with the highest bid amount; and

charging the source of the bid with the highest normalized bid amount the amount indicated by the bid with the highest normalized bid amount.

103. (Currently Amended) A method of claim 101 wherein the web page instance includes multiple display slots and advertisements are added to the display space slots of the web page instance based on the normalized bid amounts.

104. (Currently Amended) A method of claim 101 wherein a provided bid includes a requested number of web pages instances on which the advertisement is to be placed during a time period and the normalized bid amount for a bid is generated based on the bid amount and likelihood that the advertisement will be placed on the requested number of web pages instances during the time period.

105. (Currently Amended) A method of claim 101 including identifying candidate bids that are eligible to have their advertisements placed in the display slot of the web page instance and generating a normalized bid amount for the candidate bids.

106. (Cancelled)